

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 DHA-05 SS-15 EB-08 TRSE-00
INR-07 /052 W

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R 061450Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2088

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6604

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OTRA, SHUM, PINT, PGOV (TODMAN, TERENCE A.), AR, PDIP,

SUBJECT: AMB. TODMAN'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ALLARA

REF: BUENOS AIRES 6127

1. AMBASSADOR TODMAN AND THE CHARGE
D'AFFAIRES MET WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
CAPTAIN GULATER OSCAR ALLARA AND MINISTER
JUAN CARLOS ARLIA FOR 45 MINUTES AT ALLARA'S
OFFICE AT 0830 ON MONDAY, AUGUST 15. THIS WAS
FOLLOWED BY A "WORKING SESSION," ALSO FORTY-
FIVE MINUTES LONG, IN WHICH ALL MEMBERS
OF MR. TODMAN'S PARTY PARTICIPATED ALONG
WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS AMOTT, HALLMAN AND
FREEMAN. THE DEPUTY MINISTER MET AGAIN
WITH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY AT LUNCH AND
DINNER, WHERE DISCUSSIONS WERE CONTINUED.

2. PRIVATE MEETING - THIS SECTION OF THE MEETING WAS
DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO AN EXPOSITION BY THE ARGENTINE
OFFICIALS OF THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DECLINE OF THE
COUNTRY WHICH LEFT THE ARMED FORCES WITH NO ALTERNATIVE
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BUT TO ASSUME POWER. MFA OFFICIALS EXPRESSED RESENTMENT
AND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AT THE FOREIGN CRITICISM OF THE
GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPT TO RESTORE ORDER AND ASSURED AMB.
TODMAN THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS OPERATING ACCORDING TO
CONSTITUTIONAL AND STRICTLY LEGAL NORMS.

MR. TODMAN REVIEWED US POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS,

AFFIRMED THAT RESTORATION OF ORDER SHOULD NOT INVOLVE VIOLATION OF THOSE RIGHTS, AND RAISED SPECIFICALLY THE CASE OF DR. MAURICIO LOPEZ, WHICH HAS RAISED BROAD CONCERN IN BOTH ARGENTINA AND THE US (SEE B.A. 6111).

3. WORKING SESSION: GENERAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS -

AFTER THE MEETING WAS EXPANDED INTO A "WORKING SESSION," TODMAN DESCRIBED PROBLEMS OF MARITIME BOUNDARIES AND OTHER PRESSING MATTERS WHICH LED TO OUR CURRENT INTENTION TO ESTABLISH A LIAISON OFFICE IN CUBA AND THE CUBANS A SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENT IN WASHINGTON. TODMAN STRESSED THAT US HUMAN RIGHT INTENTIONS WOULD BE AS ACTIVELY SOUGHT IN CUBA AS IN OTHER COUNTRIES WITH WHICH THE US HAS FULL RELATIONS.

TODMAN THEN SPOKE OF A NEED TO REGULARIZE THE ANOMALOUS SITUATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL, AND DESCRIBED OUR HOPE THAT THE AGREEMENT WE HAVE MADE WITH PANAMA CAN QUICKLY BE RATIFIED BY THE US. (AT A LUNCHEON WHICH TOOK PLACE LATER DURING DAY CHARGE PRESENTED TEXT OF PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON PANAMA CANAL TREATY, WHICH REACHED US MORNING 8/15.)

AT BOTH MORNING WORKING SESSION AND THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER'S LUNCHEON WE FOUND ARGENTINES MOST CONFIDENTIAL

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ANXIOUS TO TALK ABOUT BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS, WHICH THEY PROFESSED TO SEE AS WEAKENDING BECAUSE OF ARGENTINA'S GROWING BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT VIS-A-VIS THE US. A SPECIFIC SUGGESTION THAT EMERGED WAS THAT THE INACTIVE ARGENTINE-US ECONOMIC COMMISSION (FOUNDED SOME 10 YEARS AGO BUT NOW MOSTLY FORGOTTEN) ACQUIRE NEW LIFE. THE ARGENTINES BELIEVE THIS WILL HELP TO IMPROVE ARGENTINA'S TRADE SITUATION WITH THE US, WHICH IS IN CHRONIC IMBALANCE. DEPUTY ECONOMY ADVISOR VIGNAUD ASSERTED THAT CONGRESS HAS TAKEN A NUMBER OF STEPS IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, DESPITE PROMISES AND GENUINE GOOD WILL ON THE PART OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, WHICH HAVE HAD DELETERIOUS EFFECTS ON TRADE. HE CLAIMED THAT ARGENTINA HAD GENERALLY IMPROVED ITS OVERALL EXPORT SALES BY SOME 15 PCT RECENTLY, WHILE ITS EXPORTS TO THE US HAD FALLEN FROM 8 PCT TO 6 PCT. VIGNAUD CITED PARTICULARLY ARGENTINA'S DISPLEASURE OVER US SPECIAL STEEL QUOTAS AND SANITARY IMPORT REGULATIONS FOR MEAT. PARTICULAR SOURCES OF COMPLAINT WERE THAT THE US ALLOWED STEEL QUOTAS TO IMPORTANT PRODUCERS WHILE PUTTING ARGENTINA INTO A "BASKET" OF SMALLER PRODUCERS AND THAT US SANTIATION REGULATIONS REFUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE CAN BE AFTOSA-FREE AREAS OF

ARGENTINA FROM WHICH UNPROCESSED MEAT OUGHT TO BE
PERMITTED ACCESS INTO THE US.

WITH REGARD TO ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS MFA ECONOMIC
ADVISOR PAULINO MASSACHIO STATED THAT A PARTICULAR
INTEREST OF HIS MINISTRY WAS TO CONSULT REGARDING FORTH-
COMING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCES IN ORDER TO
RECONCILE ARGENTINE-US POSITIONS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6604

4. WORKING SESSION: HUMAN RIGHTS - ALSO TOUCHED UPON
AT MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WORKING SESSION WAS OUR
SUGGESTION THAT THE LATIN AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN
RIGHTS CAN SERVE A USEFUL FUNCTION IN ITS FIELD AND
DESERVES TO BE STRENGTHENED. ARGENTINE RESPONSE WAS
AVOWEDLY A RESTATEMENT OF POSITION TAKEN AT GRANADA
OAS MEETING: THE COMMISSION MUST EXPAND ITS DEFINITION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ORDER TO INVESTIGATE ACTS OF
TERRORISM AGAINST A GOVERNMENT AND ITS PEOPLE, AND THE
COMMISSION MUST ALSO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO ECONOMIC
AFFAIRS AND THE "RIGHTS" OF PEOPLE TO ECONOMIC
WELLBEING.

ARGENTINES SHOWED PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY REGARDING
INTERNATIONAL VIEW OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS HERE WHEN
THE SUBJECT CAME TO SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISCRIMINATION AND
RIGHTS OF MINORITIES MEETING NOW IN GENEVA. JUAN CARLOS
ARLIA, WHO HEADS MINISTRY'S WORKING GROUP ON HUMAN
RIGHTS, ASSERTED THAT ARGENTINE HAD BEEN "SAVED" BY THE
SOVIET UNION, WHEN THE U.S.R. CAST ITS VOTE IN A

3 TO 2 (INCLUDING US) BREAK ON WHETHER ARGENTINA SHOULD
BE CITED FOR ITS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. DEPUTY
MINISTER ALLARA CITED AT ONE POINT A US SOURCE ZREPORT
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OF THE TASK FORCE ON DISORDER AND TERRORISM" OF THE
NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND
STANDARDS, OF DECEMBER 1976). TO EFFECT HIS POINT THAT
IN SITUATIONS OF INSURRECTION CIVIL AUTHORITIES SHOULD
DEFER TO THE MILITARY. DEPUTY SECRETARY ALSO CITED
POLICE STATISTICS FROM AROUND THE WORLD IN AN ATTEMPT
TO SHOW THAT ARGENTINA'S MISSING PERSONS RECORD IS NOT
SIGNIFICANTLY WORSE THAN IN OTHER COUNTRIES.
HIGGINS

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